MARVEL COMICS
19
APR
X-MEN 2099
WINNER TAKE ALL FOR VEGAS
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
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$1.50US $2.05 CAN
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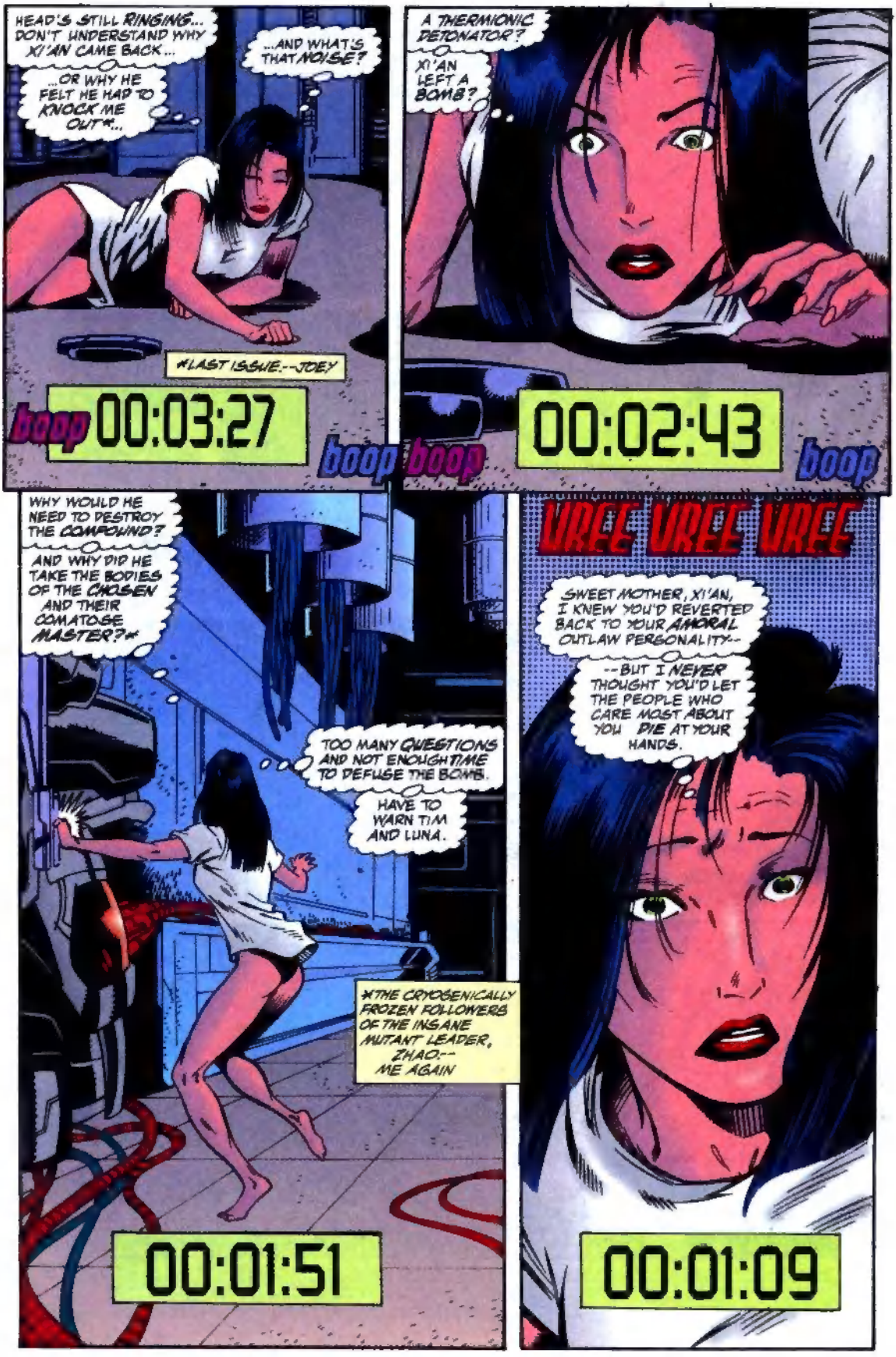
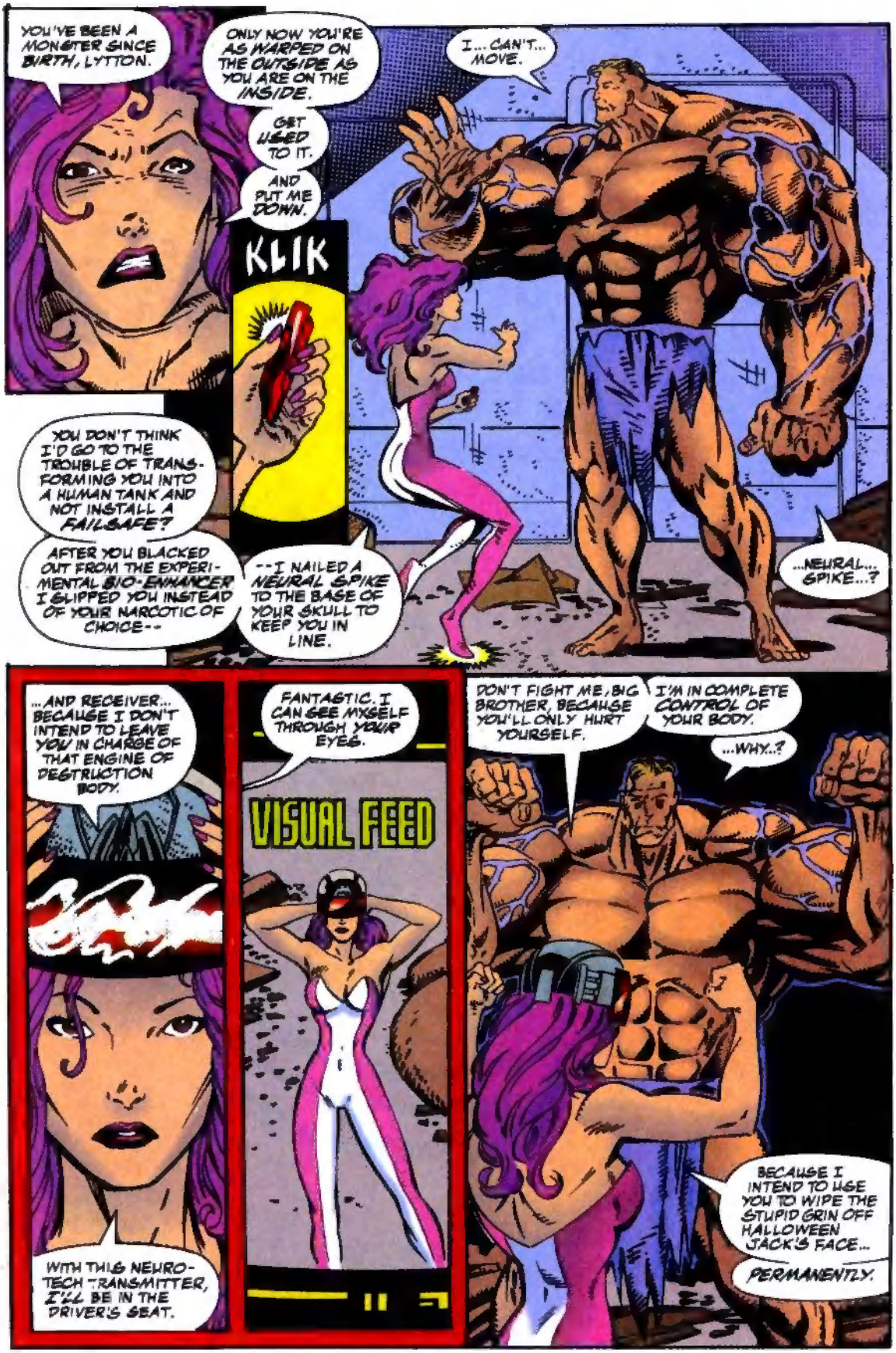
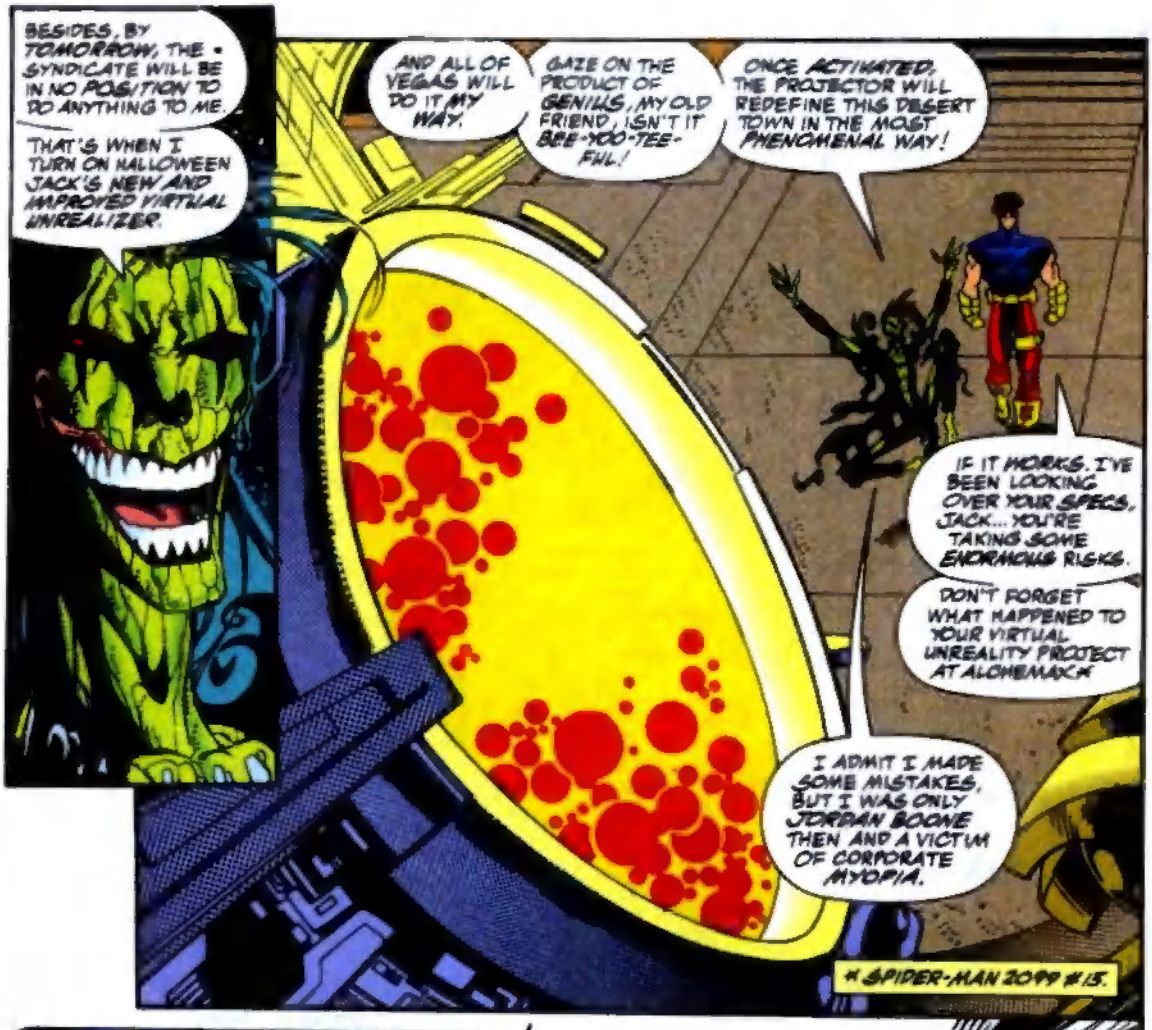

HEAD'S STILL RINGING... DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY XI'AN CAME BACK...
...OR WHY HE FELT HE HAD TO KNOCK ME OUT*...
...AND WHAT'S THAT NOISE?
*LAST ISSUE.--JOEY
boop 00:03:27
A THERMIONIC DETONATOR?
XI'AN LEFT A BOMB?
00:02:43
boop
boop boop
WHY WOULD HE NEED TO DESTROY THE COMPOUND?
AND WHY DID HE TAKE THE BODIES OF THE CHOSEN AND THEIR COMATOSE MASTER?*
TOO MANY QUESTIONS AND NOT ENOUGH TIME TO DEFUSE THE BOMB.
HAVE TO WARN TIM AND LUNA.
*THE CRYOGENICALLY FROZEN FOLLOWERS OF THE INSANE MUTANT LEADER, ZHAO.-- ME AGAIN
00:01:51
VREE VREE VREE
SWEET MOTHER, XI'AN, I KNEW YOU'D REVERTED BACK TO YOUR AMORAL OUTLAW PERSONALITY--
--BUT I NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D LET THE PEOPLE WHO CARE MOST ABOUT YOU DIE AT YOUR HANDS.
00:01:09

VREE VREE VREE VREE
WHAT'S WITH THE ALARM, HADDAD?
YEAH...YAWN: ...IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR A FIRE DRILL...
THIS IS NO DRILL...
MOVE!!!
00:00:00
KABLOOM!
WHOA... ON SECOND THOUGHT... THANKS FOR THE WAKE-UP CALL.
NOW, EXPLAIN TO ME WHY OUR TEMPORARY DIGS ARE GOING UP IN FLAME?
HE CAME BACK.
WHO CAME BACK? YOU MEAN THIS WASN'T AN ACCIDENT?
NO. XI'AN DID THIS.
IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT THE MAN WHO BROUGHT THE X-MEN TOGETHER HASN'T SIMPLY LEFT US.
HE'S TURNED AGAINST US.

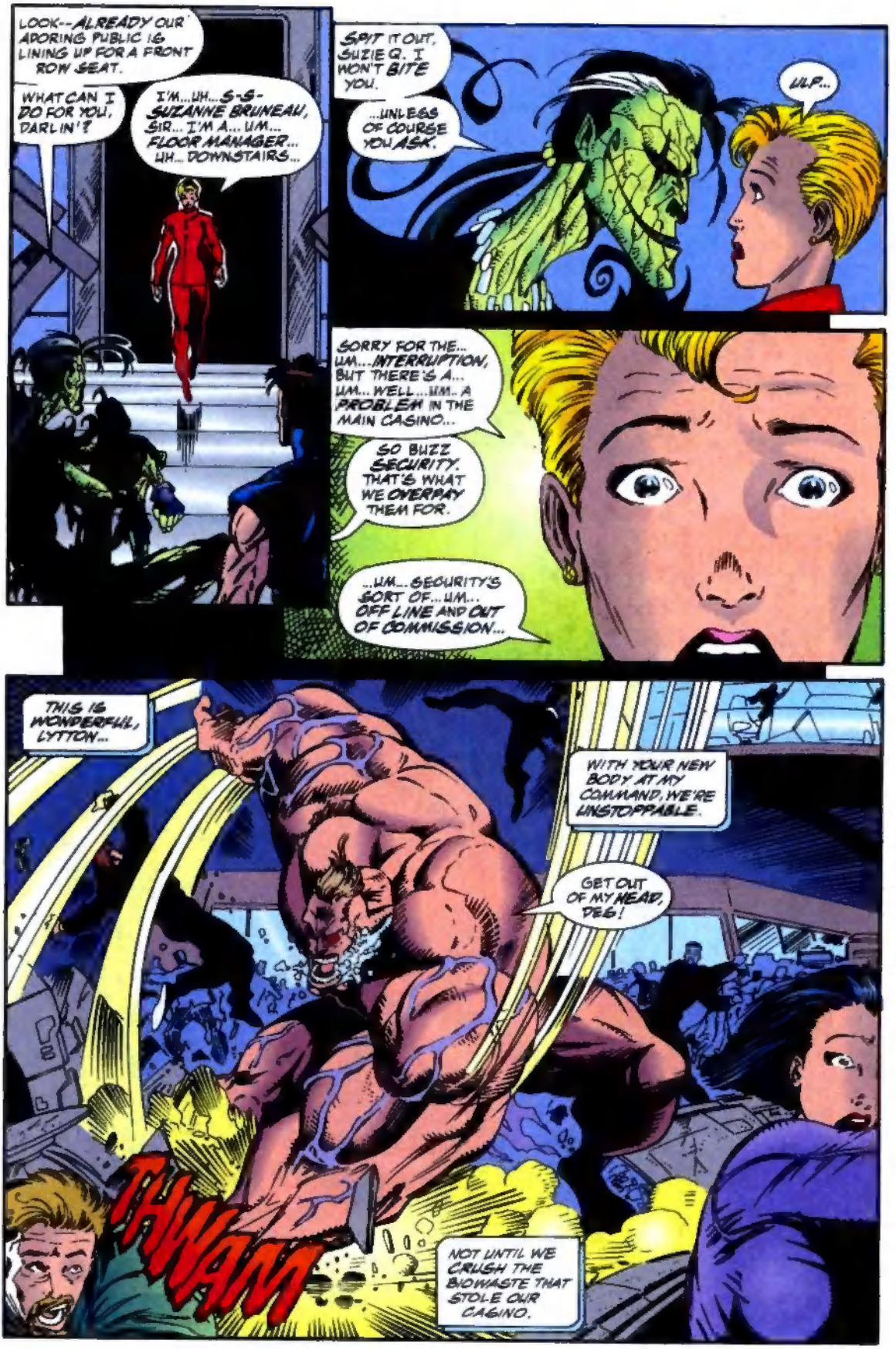
HUNDREDS OF MILES WEST OF THE FLAMES THAT BURN IN THE NEW MEXICO NIGHT--
--IN AN ANONYMOUS HOTEL SUITE SOMEWHERE ON THE VEGAS STRIP--
--TWO SIBLINGS SHARE A HEARTWARMING MOMENT OF FAMILIAL BONDING.
LOOK AT WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO ME, DESDEMONA--
--YOU'VE TURNED ME INTO A MONSTER!!!
CO-DEPENDENT BEHAVIOR
ANOTHER SESSION OF CONFRONTATIONAL GROUP THERAPY BROUGHT TO YOU BY:
JOHN MOORE, RON LIM, HARRY CANDELARIO, KEN LOPEZ, TOM SMITH, AND BOBBIE CHASE, HEAD SHRINK


YOU'VE BEEN A MONSTER SINCE BIRTH, LYTTON.
ONLY NOW YOU'RE AS WARPED ON THE OUTSIDE AS YOU ARE ON THE INSIDE.
GET USED TO IT.
AND PUT ME DOWN.
KLIK
I... CAN'T... MOVE.
YOU DON'T THINK I'D GO TO THE TROUBLE OF TRANSFORMING YOU INTO A HUMAN TANK AND NOT INSTALL A FAILSAFE?
AFTER YOU BLACKED OUT FROM THE EXPERIMENTAL BIO-ENHANCER I SLIPPED YOU INSTEAD OF YOUR NARCOTIC OF CHOICE--
--I NAILED A NEURAL SPIKE TO THE BASE OF YOUR SKULL TO KEEP YOU IN LINE.
...NEURAL... SPIKE...?
...AND RECEIVER... BECAUSE I DON'T INTEND TO LEAVE YOU IN CHARGE OF THAT ENGINE OF DESTRUCTION BODY.
FANTASTIC. I CAN SEE MYSELF THROUGH YOUR EYES.
VISUAL FEED
WITH THIS NEURO-TECH TRANSMITTER, I'LL BE IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT.
DON'T FIGHT ME, BIG BROTHER, BECAUSE YOU'LL ONLY HURT YOURSELF.
I'M IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF YOUR BODY.
...WHY..?
BECAUSE I INTEND TO USE YOU TO WIPE THE STUPID GRIN OFF HALLOWEEN JACK'S FACE...
PERMANENTLY.

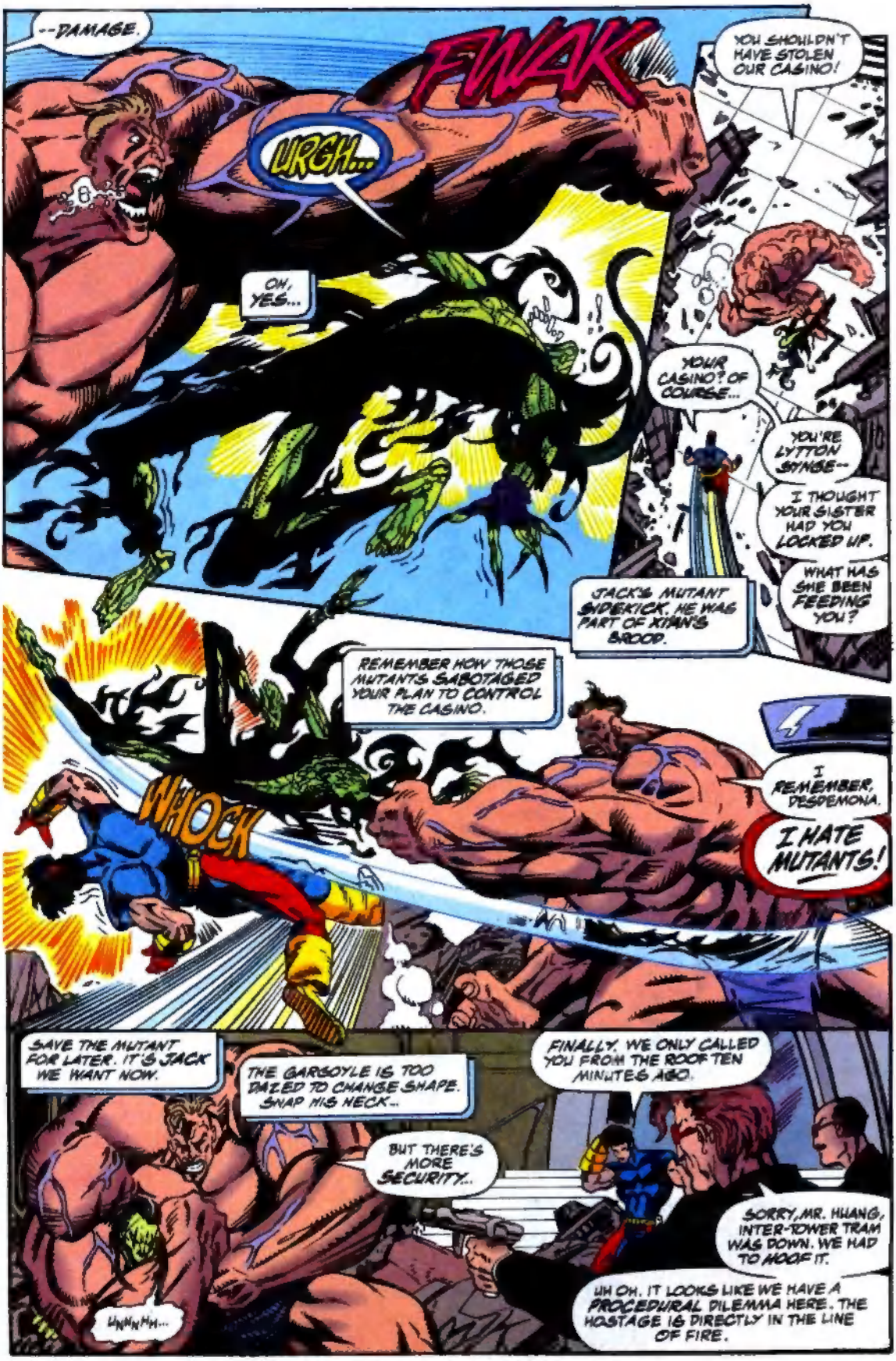
HOW'S IT HANGING, KIDDIES?
THOUGHT WE MIGHT PAINT A TARGET ON THE SIDEWALK--
--AND SEE WHICH ONE OF YOU FALLS CLOSEST TO THE BULLSEYE.
OH, BUT THESE BOYS ARE, HENRI--
WE'RE NOT MURDERERS, JACK.
--HIRED ASSASSINS SENT BY THE NEVADA SYNDICATE TO ELIMINATE US FOR LAYING CLAIM TO THEIR CITY.
THEY'RE FLUNKIES. SPLATTERING THEM AGAINST THE ASPHALT WILL ONLY SAVE THEIR EMPLOYERS THEIR KILLFEES.
DON'T BE SUCH A SPOILSPORT. I'M JUST MAKING THEM SWEAT.
TRY TO KILL HALLOWEEN JACK, WILL THEY? THE NERVE!
WHY SO GLUM, CHUMS?
YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY I TIED YOU BY YOUR LEGS AND NOT YOUR NECKS!
SO WE LET THEM DANGLE?
WELL... IMPALING THEIR HEADS ON STAKES SEEMED A LITTLE MEDIEVAL, DON'T YOU THINK?

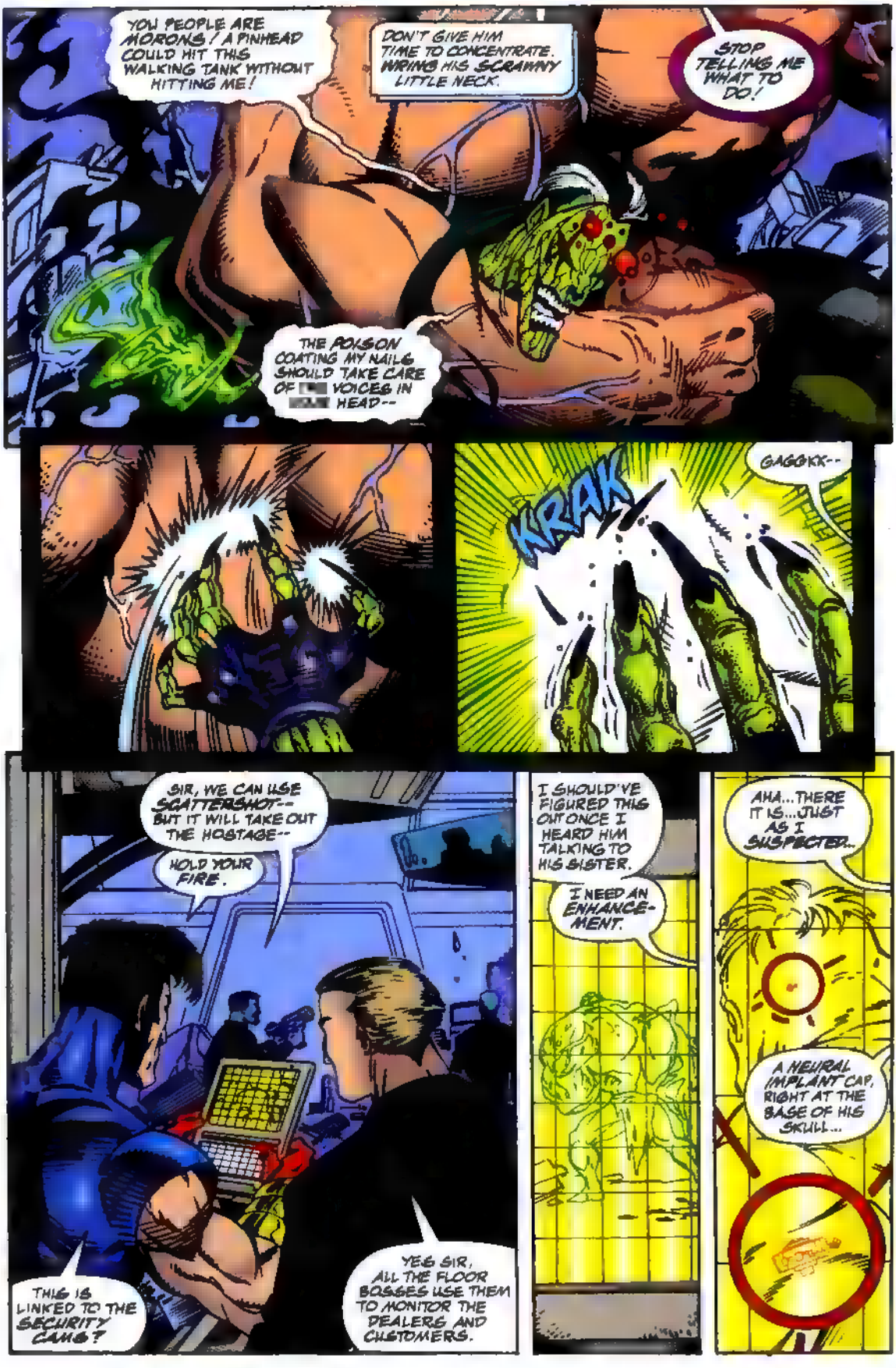

BESIDES, BY TOMORROW, THE SYNDICATE WILL BE IN NO POSITION TO DO ANYTHING TO ME.
THAT'S WHEN I TURN ON HALLOWEEN JACK'S NEW AND IMPROVED VIRTUAL UNREALIZER.
AND ALL OF VEGAS WILL DO IT MY WAY.
GAZE ON THE PRODUCT OF GENIUS, MY OLD FRIEND, ISN'T IT BEE-YOO-TEE-FUL!
ONCE ACTIVATED, THE PROJECTOR WILL REDEFINE THIS DESERT TOWN IN THE MOST PHENOMENAL WAY!
IF IT WORKS. I'VE BEEN LOOKING OVER YOUR SPECS, JACK... YOU'RE TAKING SOME ENORMOUS RISKS.
DON'T FORGET WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR VIRTUAL UNREALITY PROJECT AT ALCHEMAX
I ADMIT I MADE SOME MISTAKES, BUT I WAS ONLY JORDAN BOONE THEN AND A VICTIM OF CORPORATE MYOPIA.
« SPIDER-MAN 2099 #15.

STILL, DESPITE THOSE MINOR MISHAPS, I SUCCEEDED WHERE NO ONE HAD SINCE RICHARDS--
--AND OPENED A PORTAL TO ANOTHER DIMENSION.
NOW, HOWEVER, I WILL DO MORE THAN PULL AN EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL RABBIT OUT OF A HAT--
--I INTEND TO BRING THE OTHER DIMENSION TO A CITY DESPERATE FOR SOME REAL ACTION!
AND IF YOU SCREW UP, THERE'LL BE NOTHING LEFT BUT ONE BIG CRATER THAT USED TO BE LAS VEGAS.
UM... EX-C-CUSE M-ME...


LOOK--ALREADY OUR ADORING PUBLIC IS LINING UP FOR A FRONT ROW SEAT.
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, DARLIN'?
I'M...UH...S-S-SUZANNE BRUNEAU, SIR... I'M A... UM... FLOOR MANAGER... UH... DOWNSTAIRS...
SPIT IT OUT, SUZIE Q. I WON'T BITE YOU.
...UNLESS OF COURSE YOU ASK.
ULP...
SORRY FOR THE... UM...INTERRUPTION, BUT THERE'S A... UM... WELL...UM.. A PROBLEM IN THE MAIN CASINO...
SO BUZZ SECURITY. THAT'S WHAT WE OVERPAY THEM FOR.
...UM... SECURITY'S SORT OF...UM... OFF LINE AND OUT OF COMMISSION...
THIS IS WONDERFUL, LYTTON...
WITH YOUR NEW BODY AT MY COMMAND, WE'RE UNSTOPPABLE.
GET OUT OF MY HEAD, DEB!
THWAM
NOT UNTIL WE CRUSH THE BIOWASTE THAT STOLE OUR CAGINO.

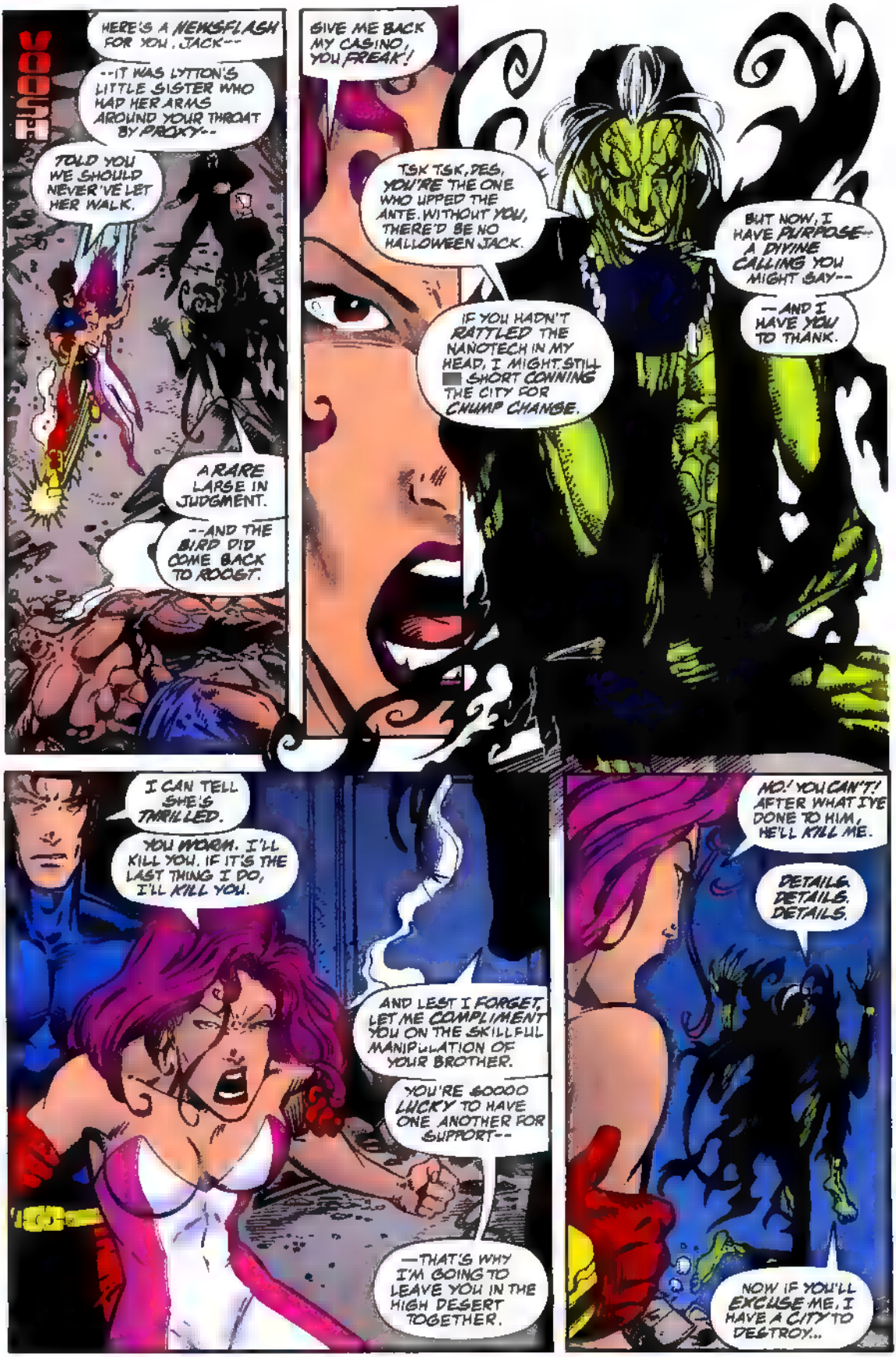
IMAGINE THAT, HENRI-- NOT ONLY DOES THE MONSTER TALK, BUT HE TALKS TO HIMSELF.
ODD. SOMETHING ABOUT THAT BRUTE SEEMS FAMILIAR.
AT LAST.
I KNEW THAT GRINNING HYENA COULDN'T STAY AWAY ONCE WE STARTED TRASHING THE MAINROOM.
JACK...
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM, HANDSOME? TOO MANY TSUNAMI TWISTERS IN THE BONGO CONGO LOUNGE?
I KNOW I KNOW HIM.
KILL HIM!
KILL!
CRASH
SUCH TENSION. LET ME GUESS-- YOU HAVEN'T HAD A DATE IN FOREVER...
DON'T ANTAGONIZE HIM, JACK. ANYTHING THAT BIG CAN DO SOME SERIOUS--


--DAMAGE.
FWAK
URGH...
OH, YES...
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE STOLEN OUR CASINO!
YOUR CASINO? OF COURSE...
YOU'RE LYTTON STINGE--
I THOUGHT YOUR SISTER HAD YOU LOCKED UP.
WHAT HAS SHE BEEN FEEDING YOU?
JACK'S MUTANT SIDEKICK. HE WAS PART OF XIAN'S BROOD.
REMEMBER HOW THOSE MUTANTS SABOTAGED YOUR PLAN TO CONTROL THE CASINO.
WHOCK
I REMEMBER, DESDEMONA.
I HATE MUTANTS!
SAVE THE MUTANT FOR LATER. IT'S JACK WE WANT NOW.
THE GARGOYLE IS TOO DAZED TO CHANGE SHAPE. SNAP HIS NECK..
BUT THERE'S MORE SECURITY..
FINALLY. WE ONLY CALLED YOU FROM THE ROOF TEN MINUTES AGO.
SORRY, MR. HUANG, INTER-TOWER TRAM WAS DOWN. WE HAD TO MOOF IT.
UH OH. IT LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE A PROCEDURAL DILEMMA HERE. THE HOSTAGE IS DIRECTLY IN THE LINE OF FIRE.
UNNNHH...


YOU PEOPLE ARE MORONS! A PINHEAD COULD HIT THIS WALKING TANK WITHOUT HITTING ME!
DON'T GIVE HIM TIME TO CONCENTRATE. WRING HIS SCRAWNY LITTLE NECK.
STOP TELLING ME WHAT TO DO!
THE POISON COATING MY NAILS SHOULD TAKE CARE OF [redacted] VOICES IN [redacted] HEAD--
KRAK
GAGGKK--
SIR, WE CAN USE SCATTERSHOT-- BUT IT WILL TAKE OUT THE HOSTAGE--
HOLD YOUR FIRE.
THIS IS LINKED TO THE SECURITY CAMS?
YES SIR, ALL THE FLOOR BOSSES USE THEM TO MONITOR THE DEALERS AND CUSTOMERS.
I SHOULD'VE FIGURED THIS OUT ONCE I HEARD HIM TALKING TO HIS SISTER.
I NEED AN ENHANCE-MENT.
AHA... THERE IT IS... JUST AS I SUSPECTED..
A NEURAL IMPLANT CAP, RIGHT AT THE BASE OF HIS SKULL...

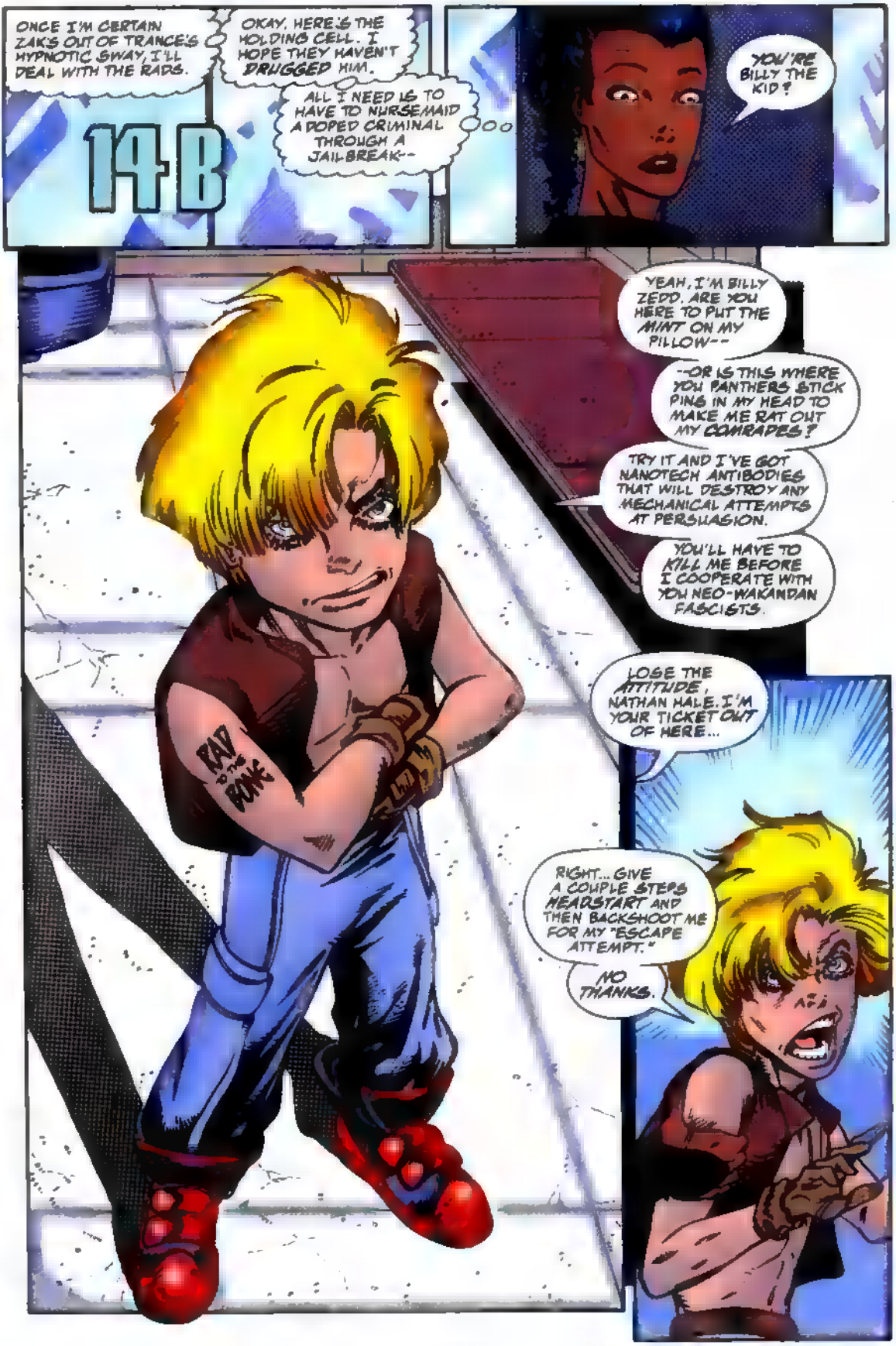
DESDEMONA.
DESDEMONA, MR. HUANG? I DON'T FOLLOW YOU.
YOU COULDN'T IF YOU WANTED TO...
WOOSH
LAST I HEARD, LYTTON WAS CURLED UP IN A CORNER WITH A 24-7 SHRIEK DRIP..
...AND WITH THAT MUCH [redacted] RUNNING THROUGH HIS VEINS--
--THE ONLY WAY YOU COULD DRAG HIM OUT OF HIS ROOM WOULD [redacted] WITH A NEUROTECH LEASH.
IT MAKES [redacted] THAT HIS SISTER WOULD [redacted] RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS RETRO-BANNER-FIT--
--AND SINCE SHE KEPT HIM UNDER HOUSE [redacted]T IN A CASINO SUITE--
--I'LL BET SHE'S STILL IN THE COMPLEX PULLING HIS STRINGS BY REMOTE CONTROL.
DOESN'T GIVE ME MUCH TIME TO FIND HER BEFORE LYTTON CRUSH[redacted] JACK'S WINDPIPE--
--OR BREAKS HIS [redacted]ECK--
--OR [redacted] BOTH.
FOR A GUY WITH A GENIUS I.Q., LETTING DES WALK WAS A FLATLINE MOVE--
"YOU KNOW ME, HENRI. I LOVE A CHALLENGE."
SOMETIMES, JACK, YOU ARE A REAL STUPID SON OF A--

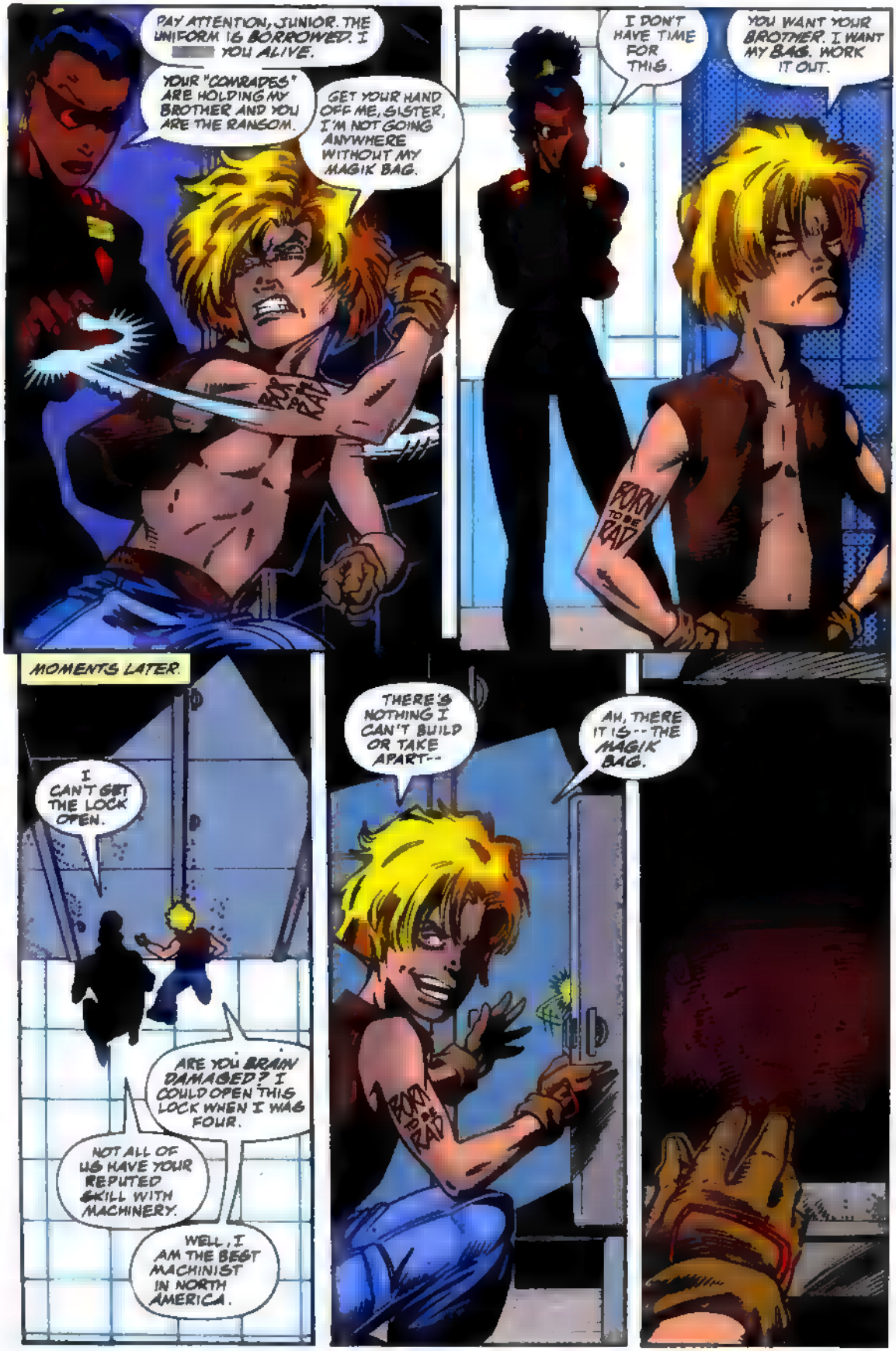
SCORE.
NOBODY CROSSES THE SYNGE FAMILY. TAKE THAT TO YOUR GRAVE--
NO DICE, DES. YOUR GET OUT OF JAIL FREE CARD HAS JUST BEEN REVOKED.
YOU FOOL... YOU'VE JUST SEVERED THE NEURAL TRANSMISSION LINK...
WITHOUT MY GUIDANCE, LYTTON CAN'T BE CONTROLLED...
AHHH... MY HEAD.. DES, WHERE ARE YOU? I DON'T HEAR YOU ANYMORE...
WHAT SHOULD WE DO, SIR?
YOUR JOB, EINSTEIN. WOULD THAT BE TOO MUCH TO ASK?
--GASP-- HE LET GO--
--LUCKY FOR ME--
FIRE, YOU IDIOTS!!
DES SSS!!
ZZZRAK
ZZRAK


SPAWN
HERE'S A NEWSFLASH FOR YOU, JACK--
--IT WAS LYTTON'S LITTLE SISTER WHO HAD HER ARMS AROUND YOUR THROAT BY PROXY--
TOLD YOU WE SHOULD NEVER'VE LET HER WALK.
A RARE LARSE IN JUDGMENT.
--AND THE BIRD DID COME BACK TO ROOST.
GIVE ME BACK MY CASINO, YOU FREAK!
TSK TSK, DES, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO UPPED THE ANTE. WITHOUT YOU, THERE'D BE NO HALLOWEEN JACK.
IF YOU HADN'T RATTLED THE NANOTECH IN MY HEAD, I MIGHT STILL ■ SHORT CONNING THE CITY FOR CHUMP CHANGE.
BUT NOW, I HAVE PURPOSE-- A DIVINE CALLING YOU MIGHT SAY--
--AND I HAVE YOU TO THANK.
I CAN TELL SHE'S THRILLED.
YOU WORM. I'LL KILL YOU. IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO, I'LL KILL YOU.
AND LEST I FORGET, LET ME COMPLIMENT YOU ON THE SKILLFUL MANIPULATION OF YOUR BROTHER.
YOU'RE SOOOO LUCKY TO HAVE ONE ANOTHER FOR SUPPORT--
--THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO LEAVE YOU IN THE HIGH DESERT TOGETHER.
NO! YOU CAN'T! AFTER WHAT I'VE DONE TO HIM, HE'LL KILL ME.
DETAILS. DETAILS. DETAILS.
NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I HAVE A CITY TO DESTROY...

THE ALAMEDA BAY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY AND DETENTION CENTER.
YEAH, WE GOT ALL THOSE TROUBLEMAKERS [redacted] DEEP STORAGE HERE--
ALL THE LORDS, HEAVIES AND DAMAGERS THAT WERE RIPPING OAKLAND APART BEFORE THE PANTHERS--
ANYWAY, WE GOT ALL THE ONES WHO LIVED.
DON'T GET QUITE AS MANY THESE DAYS. THE PANTHERS KEEP THE PEACE REAL WELL.
STEP THROUGH THE WEAPONS DETECTOR, PLEASE. PROCEDURE.
BOOP
YOU'RE CLEAR. NOW WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, LIEUTENANT...
WEBSTER.
THE INFAMOUS BILLY THE KID. GOOD LUCK, SISTER, THAT ONE'S A DIAMOND HARDCASE.
YOU ASK ME, HE'S [redacted]VER GOING TO GIVE UP HIS FREE RADICAL PALS.
WE SHOULD JUST PUT HIM ON ICE AND MAKE THOSE TECHNO ANARCHISTS THINK TWICE BEFORE THEY DUMP THEIR ACID RAIN ON OAKLAND AGAIN.
WAIT A MINUTE-- YOUR IDENTICARD BELONGS TO A SOLDIER WHO DIED THREE YEARS AGO--
I'M HERE TO INTERROGATE BILLY ZED.

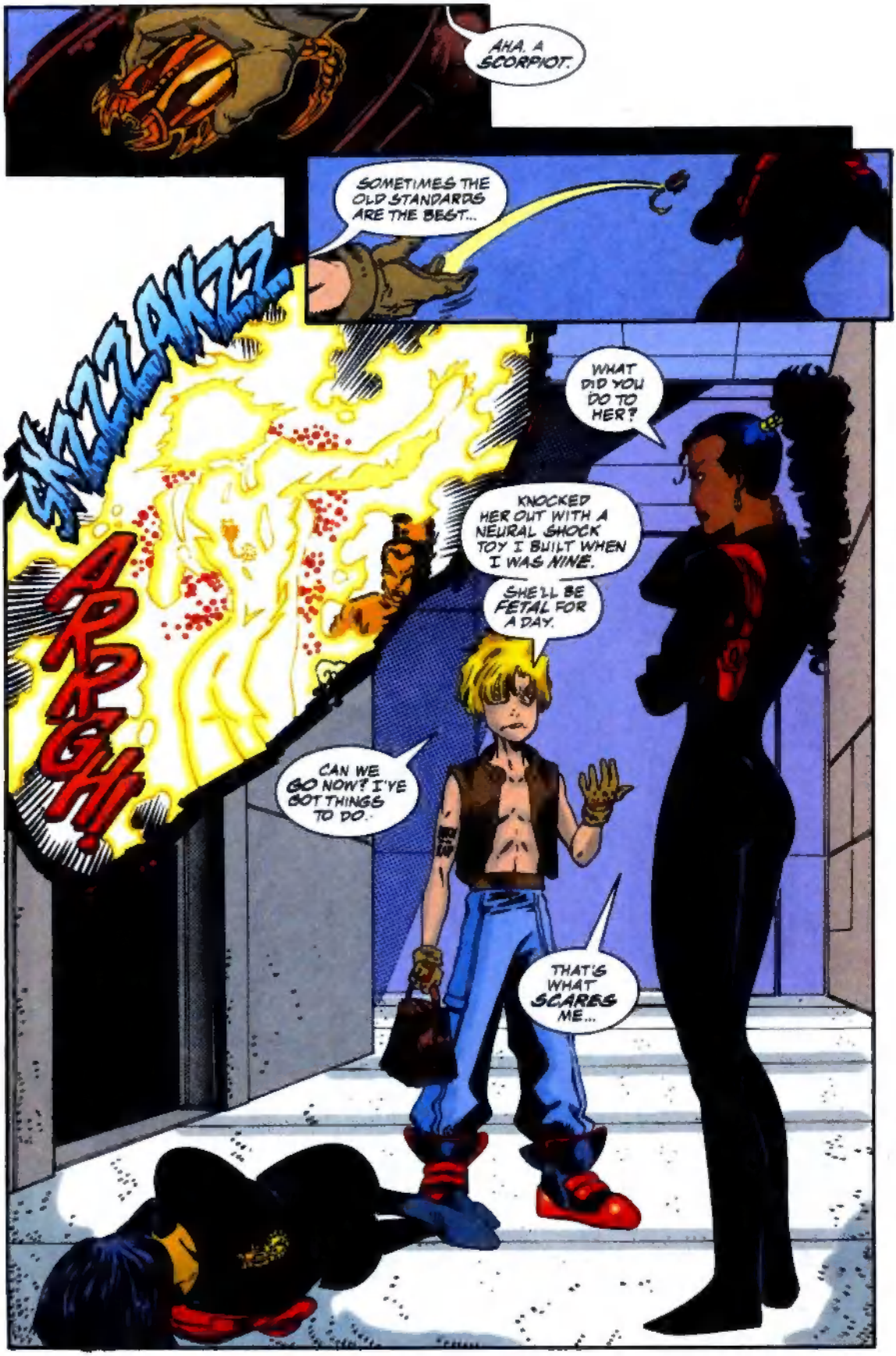
AND IT GOT ME THIS FAR.
CAN'T BELIEVE I'M MASQUERADING AS A PANTHER SOLDIER TO BREAK INTO JAIL.
I BET MY FATHER'S ROLLING IN HIS GRAVE.*
SECUR--
*KRYS'S FATHER FOUNDED OAKLAND'S SOLDIERS OF THE PANTHER.-- JOEY 'N' JOHN
MY APOLOGIES, BROTHER.
YOU'D DO THE SAME IF YOUR BROTHER WAS BEING HELD HOSTAGE BY THE FREE RADICALS.
MMMOMPH...
NOW, SINCE YOU'RE IN [redacted] POSITION TO ESCORT ME TO THE KID'S CELL, I'LL HAVE TO FIND IT MYSELF.
GOOD THING HENRI TAUGHT ME A FEW BASIC [redacted]ER MOVES.
I'M NO DUKE STRATOSPHERE, BUT I DON'T NEED TO BE TO ACCESS THE INMATE HOUSING GRID.
DETENTION CENTER
LEVEL 5
CELL 148
ZEDD, WILLIAM RITTER
INCARCERATED
09.16.
beep beep
TRANCE, THE FREE RADICAL WITH THE EVIL EYE IMPLANTS, THREATENED TO MAKE MY BROTHER ZAK KILL HIMSELF UNLESS I BROKE BILLY OUT OF JAIL.
SHE'S REALLY PUT ME BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE--!

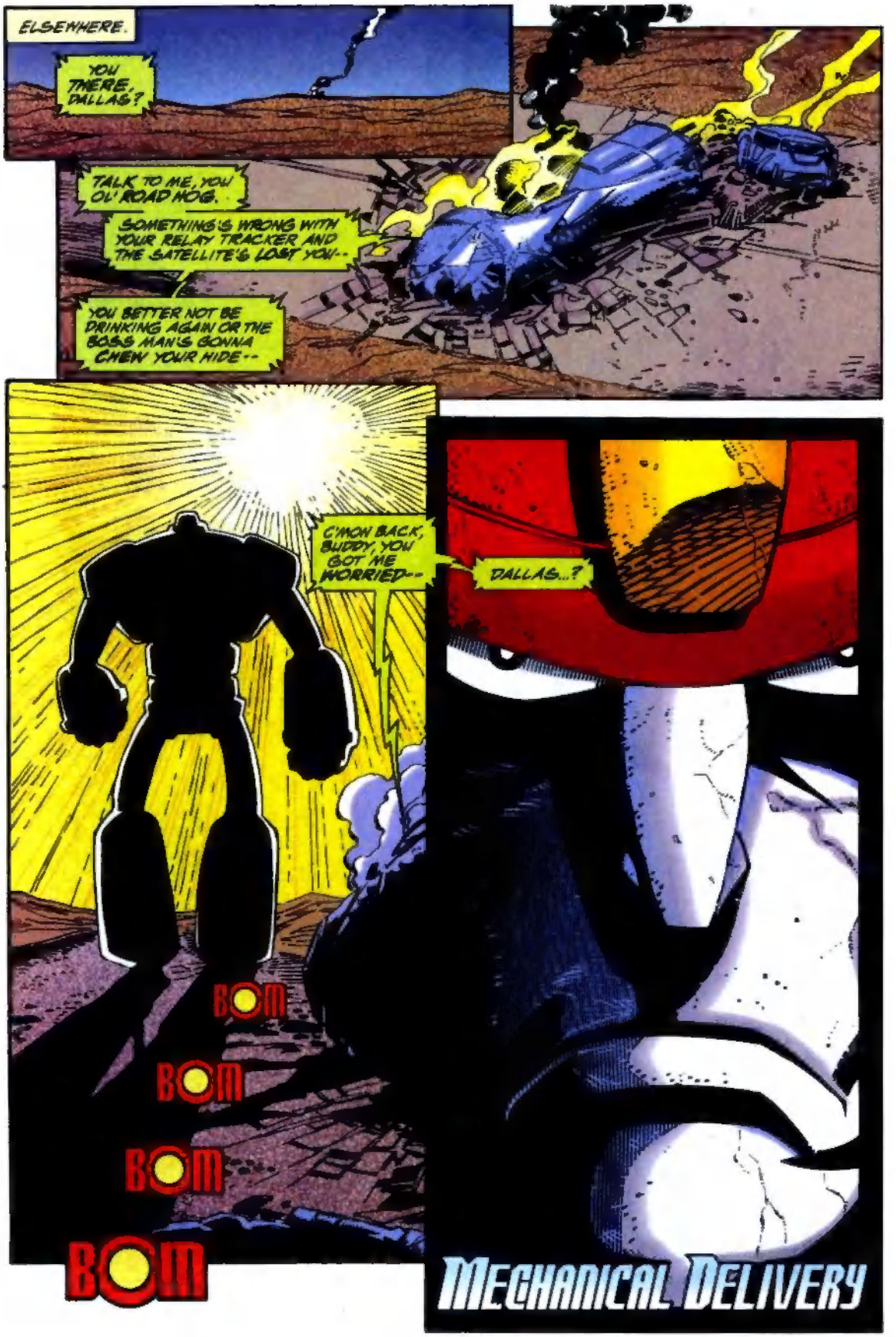

ONCE I'M CERTAIN ZAK'S OUT OF TRANCE'S HYPNOTIC SWAY, I'LL DEAL WITH THE RADS.
OKAY. HERE'S THE HOLDING CELL. I HOPE THEY HAVEN'T DRUGGED HIM.
ALL I NEED IS TO HAVE TO NURSEMAID A DOPED CRIMINAL THROUGH A JAILBREAK--
14B
YOU'RE BILLY THE KID?
YEAH, I'M BILLY ZEDD. ARE YOU HERE TO PUT THE MINT ON MY PILLOW--
--OR IS THIS WHERE YOU PANTHERS STICK PINS IN MY HEAD TO MAKE ME RAT OUT MY COMRADES?
TRY IT AND I'VE GOT NANOTECH ANTIBODIES THAT WILL DESTROY ANY MECHANICAL ATTEMPTS AT PERSUASION.
YOU'LL HAVE TO KILL ME BEFORE I COOPERATE WITH YOU NEO-WAKANDAN FASCISTS.
RAD TO THE BONE
LOSE THE ATTITUDE, NATHAN HALE. I'M YOUR TICKET OUT OF HERE...
RIGHT... GIVE A COUPLE STEPS HEADSTART AND THEN BACKSHOOT ME FOR MY "ESCAPE ATTEMPT."
NO THANKS.


PAY ATTENTION, JUNIOR. THE UNIFORM IS BORROWED. I [redacted] YOU ALIVE.
YOUR "COMRADES" ARE HOLDING MY BROTHER AND YOU ARE THE RANSOM.
GET YOUR HAND OFF ME, SISTER, I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE WITHOUT MY MAGIK BAG.
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS.
YOU WANT YOUR BROTHER. I WANT MY BAG. WORK IT OUT.
BORN TO BE RAD
MOMENTS LATER.
I CAN'T GET THE LOCK OPEN.
ARE YOU BRAIN DAMAGED? I COULD OPEN THIS LOCK WHEN I WAS FOUR.
NOT ALL OF US HAVE YOUR REPUTED SKILL WITH MACHINERY.
WELL, I AM THE BEST MACHINIST IN NORTH AMERICA.
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN'T BUILD OR TAKE APART--
AH, THERE IT IS--THE MAGIK BAG.
BORN TO BE RAD

THAT? AN OLD LEATHER VALISE?
ZOW, GRAMMA, YOU COULDN'T PAY FOR A CLUE.
THE PANTHERS THOUGHT I WAS TOTING SCRAP--
--BUT WITH A FEW DEFT MOVES, I CAN ASSEMBLE AN ARSENAL IF I HAVE TO.
LET'S MOTOR.
STAY WHERE YOU ARE.
LIEUTENANT NISHIHARA.
KRYSTALIN. YOU'RE INSANE TO RISK YOUR LIFE FOR A DANGEROUS CRIMINAL LIKE ZEDD!
I'M TRYING TO KEEP MY BROTHER ZAK--YOUR PANTHER MINISTER--FROM BEING KILLED.
I TOLD YOU TO LEAVE YOUR BROTHER'S RECOVERY TO THE PANTHERS.
TYPICAL. THE PANTHERS ALWAYS THINK THEY KNOW WHAT'S BEST FOR EVERYONE.
GOING TO STAND THERE AND TAKE THAT FROM HER?
NO.
SPROIIIH
YOUR CRYSTAL GENERATING ABILITIES DIDN'T PREVENT THE RADS FROM KIDNAPPING YOUR BROTHER--
--AND THEY'LL DO YOU NO BETTER AGAINST ME.

I HAVE TO TRY, LIEUTENANT.
WHOOSH!
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN REALLY OUTFIGHT ONE OF THE PANTHER ELITE?
I WAS TRAINED IN THE WAKANDAN SCHOOL OF COMBAT--!
THWAK
I'M BORED ALREADY...
HOPE THESE PANTHERS DIDN'T TOUCH ANY OF MY TECASTUFF--
SURRENDER, KRYSTALIN.
I AM UNCOMFORTABLE IN HAVING TO DISCIPLINE ONE OF FOUNDER'S OFFSPRING.
--EVEN ONE WITH AS LITTLE REGARD FOR HER FATHER'S DOCTRINE AS YOU.
KWUMP


AHA. A SCORPIOT.
SOMETIMES THE OLD STANDARDS ARE THE BEST...
SKIZZAKZZ
ARRGH!
WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER?
KNOCKED HER OUT WITH A NEURAL SHOCK TOY I BUILT WHEN I WAS NINE.
SHE'LL BE FETAL FOR A DAY.
CAN WE GO NOW? I'VE GOT THINGS TO DO.
THAT'S WHAT SCARES ME...


ELSEWHERE.
YOU THERE, DALLAS?
TALK TO ME, YOU OL' ROAD HOG.
SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH YOUR RELAY TRACKER AND THE SATELLITE'S LOST YOU--
YOU BETTER NOT BE DRINKING AGAIN OR THE BOSS MAN'S GONNA CHEW YOUR HIDE--
C'MON BACK, BUDDY, YOU GOT ME WORRIED--
DALLAS...?
BOM
BOM
BOM
BOM
MECHANICAL DELIVERY